

## **FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

November 7, 2012

Draft Meeting Minutes

### **FMAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr. Bill Botti, Chair, Michigan Forest Association

Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University

Ms. Kim Korbecki, Assistant, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Mr. Marvin Roberson, Sierra Club

Mr. Scott Robbins, Michigan Forest Products Council

Ms. Lauri Elbing, the Nature Conservancy

Mr. Evan Cusick, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (representing Ms. Amy Trotter)

Mr. Gary Melow, Michigan Biomass

Mr. Bill O'Neill, Forest Resources Division, DNR

Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging

### **FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT**

Mr. Barry Paulson, United States Forest Service, Huron-Manistee

### **PUBLIC PRESENT**

Mr. Joe Pettit, Department of Environmental Quality

Mr. David Price, DNR

Ms. Valerie Lafferty, DNR

#### **I. Welcome**

**Chair Botti** called the November 7 Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) meeting to order at 1:13 p.m. He welcomed Mr. Joe Pettit, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Ms. Valerie Lafferty, Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

#### **II. Action Items**

- Adoption of November 7, 2012 FMAC Meeting Agenda  
The November 7, 2012 FMAC meeting agenda was adopted, as amended.
- Adoption of July 11, 2012 FMAC Meeting Summary  
The July 11, 2012 FMAC Meeting Minutes were passed, as amended.

#### **III. Public Comment**

**Ms. Lafferty** commented that she and Mr. Pettit are part of the Leadership Academy. The Academy is a year-long program. A requirement of the program is to do a project paper. Hers is going to be on family forests. Another requirement is to get out to committee meetings. Mr. Pettit is working with oil, gas, and minerals. There were around 60 applicants for the Academy and only about 50% of the applicants were accepted to participate in the 12-month program.

They are working on a total of 7 projects with 3 or 4 people on each team. The projects have been approved by managers throughout the departments. One of the projects is employee engagement (how can the departments work together to increase their employee engagement). **Chair Botti** stated he had not heard of this program and was happy to hear about it. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if there are different leadership academies. **Mr. O'Neill** responded that there are several. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented that there is a problem in the field between all the different divisions; the standards are different and they do not know which standards they should be meeting.

**Mr. Pettit** stated their goal with the project is to perhaps use it as a pilot project or model to combine program areas in the future; to form a partnership of resources within the 3 departments. The DEQ and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development kicked this off because they reside in the same building. Michigan State University has the Great Lakes Leadership Academy and charges tuition. This Academy has no cost to the employee. There are 33 volunteer mentors paired with the 32 Academy attendees. Mentors must be 2 levels higher than the attendee they are working with. This program has been supported by all 3 departments. **Mr. Pettit** believes we have an opportunity to improve relationships between the departments.

#### IV. **Perspectives on Forest Science and Management**

**Dr. Sharik** gave a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation can be found here: (I'll have Kim St. Onge put the link in once it is set).

#### V. **FMAC's Relevance and Effectiveness**

**Mr. O'Neill** stated he has been with the FMAC for about 6 months. Although he was not a part of the group before that, he knew from working with Ms. Lynne Boyd the benefits of the FMAC. The Forest Resources Division (FRD) is looking to manage the state forest system sustainably. The question is how to do this. He thought the FMAC was one way to be sure the DNR is doing this correctly. He asked the FMAC if it felt it was being listened to.

**Dr. Sharik** stated he had read the charge and in his opinion the charge is very much in line with what a committee such as FMAC would do. He thought the content and vision was correct. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented he is concerned that the FMAC has not been doing a good enough job producing a product. He wondered if it should be taking a look at the structure of the FMAC with the formation of TAC, and the move of the FRD's recreation section from Forest Resources Division to Parks and Recreation Division. Perhaps it is time to restructure the FMAC. **Mr. Roberson** stated he hopes the DNR gets a variety of perspectives from around the state; just because the FMAC has not produced many products does not mean it has not been productive. He feels it is more important that the DNR understand the different perspectives being presented.

**Mr. Melow** commented there is some sort of product the FMAC needs to be producing. He questioned if it has identified what environment, social and economic items there are. Has it defined and identified what forest resources are in the state. He feels it needs to be more than just Mr. O'Neill in the room. The FMAC needs to provide formal recommendations, provide a road map it can look at on an annual basis, and figure out what issues it is going to tackle and how it is going to tackle it. **Dr. Sharik** commented it would be very helpful if the FMAC brought specific issues to the table.

**Mr. O'Neill** stated that for the next couple of months, the FMAC should concentrate on the regional planning process the DNR is currently undertaking. The DNR needs the FMAC's help with this. It needs to figure out if the documents meet its goals and objectives. **Mr. Melow** stated it fits in with Article 2(f) of the bylaws; the FMAC needs to present its comments on the regional plans.

**Mr. Robbins** thinks the group has a great opportunity to be relevant with people from all different areas of expertise. The FMAC needs to take advantage of it, and if it does not perhaps there is no use for the FMAC. **Mr. O'Neill** asked what FRD can do to accomplish its mission and objectives. A suggestion was made to frame an annual agenda based on specific topic areas. The FMAC would also like to receive an update on the DNR's goals and objectives.

**Mr. O'Neill** reported that FRD will be jumping into strategic planning once the DNR completes its process. **Mr. Melow** commented that the FMAC needs to understand what the DNR's issues are. If the FMAC understands its role, the DNR will then know what to bring to the FMAC for its assistance. Mr. Melow can see recommendations from this group moving into quality of life. Forest Resources is a web; it cannot be done in just one discipline. The FMAC needs to bring them all together.

**Mr. O'Neill** asked the FMAC to make its next task to help in creating the three eco-regional plans. He asked the FMAC to look at the process and give its perspectives.

#### VI. **Regional State Forest Planning Process**

**Mr. Price** stated the DNR and FRD has struggled with planning for many years and has on occasion worked with local interests, such as the Pigeon River Country Plan. It used to have a key value approach to forest management and the DNR has developed a couple of plans based on that concept. **Dr. Sharik** wondered if part of the problem is the missing link between human and natural environment.

**Mr. Price** reported the DNR had a pilot project and it got so far as to having a draft plan for the eastern Upper Peninsula and the western Upper Peninsula. It was then told it had to be forest certified. The DNR then decided it needed to develop

regional state forest plans and now has three draft plans completed. The DNR has a number of staff that has worked very hard on the project. The draft plans were sent to FMAC, the TAC, Michigan tribes, etc. The DNR has started to get comments back. The initial public comments period will be extended and then the DNR will look at the issues that were stated in the comments. The plans are incorporating new concepts for the DNR, in terms of management areas (MA). There are about 30 MAs. It is trying to figure out what to do with certain MAs.

SCORP is going through a public comment period right now, as well as others. Right now the primary focus is in management of vegetation types. The plan is 6 general chapters including forest history, current conditions and management areas plans. Staff will be expected to use the plans in compartment reviews.

**Dr. Sharik** asked how the DNR deals with cutting across ownerships.

**Mr. Roberson** said he is very excited about this. The DNR does a good job on compartment review planning and management.

**Chair Botti** asked for some guidelines on what level the DNR would like the FMAC to comment at. **Mr. Price** responded his suggestion is to not dive into the details, but to look at the broad theme and what is trying to be accomplished. He suggested the FMAC also look at how well sustainability is covered, as well as the issue of cross ownerships, etc. The plans really are not meant to address private ownership. **Ms. Elbing** asked if the plan gets into detail of future desired conditions. **Mr. Price** responded that it does. This is the first step in the DNR trying to explain its management style.

**Mr. Paulson** asked how we get people to attend the meetings; how do we get them engaged. Is there an opportunity for the FMAC to assist here since it has a diverse group that can encourage people to get involved? **Mr. Price** told the FMAC that FRD now has Ms. Beth Clute who is the promotional agent for FRD. He also reported there will be a future article coming out on the DNR's showcase program that will focus on these regional plans.

**Chair Botti** asked what plan the FMAC should look at between now and the January 2013 FMAC meeting. **Mr. Melow** suggested the FMAC set up a committee between now and then to look at and identify issues, and then to assign portions for FMAC members to review. **Mr. O'Neill** stated the DNR will accept comments from the FMAC after January 2. He suggested the FMAC look at the plan and be prepared to discuss sections 4 and 5 in particular. He also stated if the FMAC wants to meet between now and the January 9 meeting, FRD can set up a conference call. **Chair Botti** thanked Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Price.

## VII. **FMAC's 2013 Meeting Schedule**

After discussion, the 2013 meeting schedule was approved with the change of the September 4 meeting to be held in Marquette.

**VIII. Standing Discussion Items**

- **Legislative Update**

Regarding SB 1276, the FMAC recommends the DNR oppose this bill as written. It could have bad consequences. **Mr. O'Neill** reported the DNR has not yet taken a position on this bill. **Mr. Suchovsky** stated if this bill is enacted to the extent it now written at, it is unknown what the impact will be on the state's forest certification. **Mr. Robbins** stated he believes the language of the bill has been softened. The bill has been in the committee for months and he thinks the problems that were presented have been met with the rewrite of the bill.

**Mr. Melow** said the definition of biodiversity is inherently a bad thing, at least as it was introduced in the bill; it was too broad. **Mr. Price** stated the bill specifically denies the DNR from doing any biodiversity stewardship areas. Ms. Korbecki was asked to send the bill to the FMAC.

- **Improving Public Involvement Process**

No discussion took place.

**VIII. Next Meeting Date / Agenda Items**

Meeting Date: January 9, 2012

Location: MUCC, Lansing

**IX. Agenda Items**

Regional State Forest Planning Process

How Paranoid, Delusional Conspiracy Theories about the United Nations are Affecting Natural Resource Management in Michigan

Standing Issue: adding TAC update

**Chair Botti** adjourned the November 7 FMAC meeting at 3:50 p.m.